United Nations A/C.2/71/SR.14

General Assembly
Seventy-first session

Official Records

Distr.: General
14 November 2016

Original: English

Second Committee

Summary record of the 14th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 17 October 2016, at 3 p.m.

Vice-Chair: Ms. Nipomici ..... (Republic of Moldova)

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16-17966 (E)

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In the absence of Mr Djani (Indonesia), Ms. Nipomici (Republic of Moldova), Vice-Chair, took the Chair

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 23: Eradication of poverty and other development issues (*continued*) (A/71/173)

(a) Implementation of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017) (*continued*) (A/71/181)

(b) Industrial development cooperation (*continued*) (A/71/264)

1. **Ms. Scott** (Namibia) said that in 2015, her country had adopted the Sustainable Development Goals and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and had committed to fully implement it through national development frameworks over the following 20 years. The aim was to eradicate poverty and hunger, fight inequality, and ensure that no one was left behind.

2. Namibia would work with other States to achieve that noble ideal; it had participated in the drafting of the African Union's Agenda 2063 and was integrating the 2030 Agenda into its national development plans, especially Goal 1 (No Poverty) and Goal 2 (Zero Hunger). It had made substantial progress since its independence in 1990 in spite of having faced considerable development challenges. A small country of 2.2 million people, it had experienced major droughts and floods, unfavourable unemployment rates, inequality, housing inadequacy, and widespread poverty.

3. To address those and other challenges, it had enthusiastically set about implementing the 2030 Agenda. In 2015, a Ministry of Poverty Eradication had been created within the Office of the President. A food bank had also been created to combat the effects of ongoing extreme drought and workshops had been held to ensure the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, which were interlinked in terms of executing the three dimensions of sustainable development: inclusive economic growth, protection of the environment, and social inclusion.

4. Her delegation looked forward to the high-level political forum on sustainable development to be convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council in July 2017; it would provide leadership on the implementation and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda. Namibia urged the sharing of best practices and lessons learned at every opportunity, also reiterating the need for predictable financing to implement the 2030 Agenda, with programmes specifically targeting the eradication of poverty and hunger.

5. Her delegation took note of the challenges outlined by Ms. Dambisa Moyo in her keynote address at the Committee's 2nd meeting on the topic "One World, One Vision: Tackling Global Imbalances to achieve the 2030 Agenda", and in the report of the Secretary General on the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty indicating that inequality was most pronounced among women and youth. It therefore supported programmes spearheaded by women and youth as agents and drivers of economic and social development.

6. She highlighted the importance of continuous strong promotion of international trade that was based on a well-functioning, universal, rules-based, non-discriminatory, multilateral trading system and recognized regional trade as a vehicle for globalization. Committee discussions underscored the need to continue advocating for targeted capacity-building systems and to enhance international support for them with a view to promoting employment creation. Economic growth would be a major contributor to the eradication of poverty and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

7. **Mr. Cao** Zhiyong (China) said that the international community should create an environment conducive to the eradication of poverty and ensure that the people of each country enjoyed equal opportunities for development. Countries should prioritize poverty eradication as the core task of the 2030 Agenda, uncover the root causes of poverty, and work together to formulate sustainable, stable, long-term policies to address it. He stressed the need to implement inclusive economic and social policies, establish better social security and health care systems, reduce poverty caused by natural disasters and disease, and build fair and equitable global development partnerships. The developed countries should provide development assistance and support developing countries, particularly African and least developed countries, in their efforts to eradicate poverty.

8. From 2010 to 2015, the rural poverty figure in China had dropped from 166 million to around 56 million. China would lift the remainder of its rural population out of poverty over the next five years, an important step in its implementation of the 2030 Agenda and a demonstration of its resolve to achieve early results. At the same time, it would assist other developing countries, especially the least developed countries, in reducing poverty and improving livelihoods. Global industrial development cooperation would help to promote poverty reduction and economic recovery among developing countries. China recognized that the new concept of inclusive and sustainable industrial development, as advocated by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), required that developing countries raise their levels of industrialization in line with their respective national conditions and stage of development, so as to upgrade their industries. One of the outcomes of the 2016 Summit of the Group of 20 had been an initiative supporting industrialization in African and least developed countries that would energize the processes of interlinked development and industrialization. China stood ready to work with all countries to accomplish the lofty goal of eliminating poverty around the world.

9. **Mr. Tuy** (Cambodia) said that Cambodia had succeeded in achieving poverty reduction and other Millennium Development Goal targets before 2015 and had been chosen by the United Nations as a model. His country had achieved lower-middle-income status in 2015 through greater integration into the region. The Sustainable Development Goals would be important to support Cambodia's transition from least-developed to upper-middle-income status by 2030.

10. At the local level, Cambodia sought to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by investing in education, health and economic diversification. It planned to increase the share of its gross domestic product (GDP) represented by the industrial sector to 30 per cent by 2025 and diversify exports to avoid excessive reliance on the garment, tourism and agriculture industries, which were vulnerable to external shocks as well as climate change.

11. In collaboration with its development partners, the Government had taken a number of actions to address poverty and rural development. It attached particular importance to maintaining macroeconomic stability; improving rural livelihoods; expanding job opportunities; building capacities; strengthening institutions and improving governance; reducing vulnerability and strengthening social inclusion; and promoting gender equity. Population, urbanization and non-agricultural jobs were other priority areas.

12. As agricultural development was essential to poverty reduction, his Government had focused on implementing land reforms, distributing farmland to landless farmers, expanding irrigation, strengthening institutional mechanisms, utilizing modern farm inputs, and extending credit to farmers. Food security and nutrition reforms had been incorporated into the National Strategic Development Plan 2014-2018, in keeping with the ideology that "no one should die of starvation and ignorance". The National Strategic Development Plan contained a road map for the implementation of the Rectangular Strategy (Phase III) for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency, which outlined visible and realistic programmes and projects to achieve health and education vital to harmony within the family and society.

13. Achieving poverty reduction depended on progress in robust and equitable macroeconomic growth; strongly checking inflation; significantly increasing agricultural production and productivity; protecting and enhancing the environment; strengthening and improving infrastructure; employment creation; public administration and judiciary reform; and fast growth in the services sector, including tourism.

14. Cambodia was strongly committed to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 1 on ending poverty in all its forms everywhere. However, poverty eradication would require the engagement and partnership of all stakeholders. The 2030 Agenda could only succeed if developed countries put more effort into earnestly honouring their official development assistance (ODA) commitments. Support for developing countries must be increased with no political strings attached and a new, more equitable and balanced global development partnership must be built.

15. **Ms. Kone-Fofana** (Côte d'Ivoire) said that combating poverty was a top priority for her Government, which had integrated the Sustainable Development Goals into its two main development programmes, the National Development Plan and the Perspective Côte d'Ivoire 2040 initiative. Considering

the sizable economic growth her country had enjoyed over the period 2012-2015 as a result of political stability and proper functioning of institutions, the prospects of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals were good. All sectors of the economy had benefited from increased private and public investment, while health, educational, environmental and other programmes over the previous several years had led to concrete results in reducing poverty and improving living conditions. The agriculture and services sectors, for instance, had seen significant growth in production of cash crops and volume of users, respectively, while efforts in the area of combating corruption and improving the business environment were expected to allow Côte d'Ivoire to regain its status as a driver of economic growth in the West African Economic and Monetary Union.

16. In addition to plans aimed at eradicating poverty through economic growth, the Government had, with its partners, initiated programmes to ensure educational opportunities for children; create jobs for youth; and enable women, especially rural women, to improve their financial and other skills through better access to credit and means of production. Her delegation called on bilateral and multilateral partners to join her country in those endeavours, which would further the causes of reducing poverty and inequalities and implementing the 2030 Agenda. Her Government, which endorsed the vision set out in the African Union's Agenda 2063, believed that industrialization would be an invaluable tool for achieving sustainable development. She called for further cooperation to that end, and stressed the importance of honouring development financing commitments under the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Development Financing.

17. **Mr. Peketi** (Togo) said that women accounted for half the population of Togo, and slightly more than half of its working population and informal sector. The Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, the introduction of the National Forum on Togolese Women, and the adoption of a family code were among the measures his country had taken to improve their situation. It had also ratified international instruments on the empowerment of women and adopted strategies for access to microfinance, which had permitted the most vulnerable members of society to engage in productive economic activities.

18. His Government accorded top priority to the health sector. Under its national plans for health development, infant and child mortality rates had been nearly halved and new perspectives toward opening community mental health centres and providing essential medicines had taken hold. As long as developing countries were plagued by weak agricultural production, high unemployment, inequalities and social exclusion, economic crises and climate change, strong international cooperation would be necessary to promote industrialization, job creation in productive sectors, and higher incomes in fragile States. Togo had already launched a national process of structural transformation that took into account the economic, social and environmental dimensions of development, and would continue to lend its support to international actions to eliminate poverty, which spawned terrorism, conflicts and other challenges.

19. **Mr. Thammavongsa** (Lao People's Democratic Republic), stressing the importance of translating the 2030 Agenda into concrete actions, said that the poverty rate in the Lao People's Democratic Republic had decreased from 27.6 to 23.2 per cent between 2008 and 2013. His country was resolved to further reduce poverty and graduate from least-developed-country status. The progress it had achieved thus far had been possible through country-led efforts and the support and assistance of external partners, including development partners, United Nations agencies, and international organizations. The Sustainable Development Goals had been mainstreamed into the eighth national Five-Year National Social Economic Development Plan 2016-2020 (NSEDP). Localized Millennium Development Goal 9 on reducing the impact of unexploded ordnance had been carried over as Sustainable Development Goal 18 for the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

20. His country was strongly committed to eradicating poverty with a view to transcending least-developed-country status and had mobilized domestic and external resources to achieve its national development goals. It called upon development partners, United Nations agencies and international organizations to mainstream activities related to least developed countries into their policies and programmes and focus assistance on national priorities directly related to those countries' development needs.

21. **Mr. Yacouba** (Niger) said that reducing poverty was difficult in West Africa, particularly in the countries of the West African Economic and Monetary Union, which ranked among the lowest in the world on the Human Development Index. The scale of economic factors and regularity of natural disasters and locust attacks made it easy to lose sight of the root causes of poverty, as had happened in the case of the food crisis of 2005. The people of Niger had to contend with such health challenges as illness, disability and aging, long hours and low wages for rural workers, and low returns on production, and weak profit margins for informal activities in urban areas. School enrolment and literacy rates had risen over the previous several years, and infant mortality rates had dropped, but maternal mortality rates had risen. Access to drinking water had improved thanks to improved hydropower for villages and towns, but was still inadequate, as was access to electricity. With a view to fulfilling target 7.c of the Millennium Development Goals on halving the proportion of the population without access to safe drinking water, Niger had been seeking to achieve integrated water-resources management in accordance with the Dublin Statement on Water and Sustainable Development.

22. The Constitution of the Republic and other official texts formed the basis for governance, democracy and the rule of law in Niger, and the establishment of institutions dedicated to combating corruption, trafficking and financial crimes had improved its overall Corruption Perceptions Index.

23. **Mr. Muenda** (South Africa) said that although the number of people living on less than $1.25 a day had decreased worldwide, in Africa their numbers had increased. More needed to be done not only to address the symptoms of poverty but also to create physical, social, economic and political conditions that would support poverty eradication efforts and leave no one behind. The United Nations should provide coordinated support for national poverty eradication initiatives within the context of the 2030 Agenda. As indicated in the *Trade and Development Report, 2016*, development was a transformative process that created a virtuous circle of resource mobilization, increased employment, higher incomes, expanding markets and investment. United Nations entities should therefore enhance their coordination to ensure that their sustainable development efforts yielded the intended outcomes and that regions that lagged behind were prioritized.

24. His Government was also committed to the implementation of Agenda 2063 of the African Union. All sectors of African society should work together to build a prosperous and united Africa. The 2030 Agenda complemented the African Union's activities and would give Africa a good head start. Adequate financing for development, as outlined in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and sufficient official development assistance from development partners would also be needed.

25. Improved human resource development through education and skills development would help prevent the intergenerational transmission of poverty. His country was building an economy that created jobs, including through self-employment opportunities and improved educational outcomes.

26. Poverty eradication could not be achieved without improving rural development and the agricultural economy. In many African countries, around half of the poor lived in rural areas; interventions would be necessary to transform their situation. Investment in human capital through health care, education and training would enable more people to be economically active. Poor households could be left destitute as a result of disability, age or illness and therefore needed a safety net, which his Government provided in the form of social grants as well as basic services and other non-financial transfers.

27. Social inclusion was needed to ensure a more inclusive society with more integrated structures across class, race, religion and gender. Social capital needed to be strengthened, especially for the poor so that they could expand their networks and have access to information. Inasmuch as possible, greater economic opportunities for the poor should be linked to the protection and rehabilitation of ecosystems, the reversal of environmental degradation, and the promotion of ecotourism.

28. **Mr. Zamora Rivas** (El Salvador) said that his country welcomed recent multilateral achievements in the area of sustainable development and poverty eradication in particular. However, in spite of efforts made at the global level, much remained to be done. One of the main achievements of the 2030 Agenda was

the linkage between poverty and inequality. Indeed, poverty eradication required a reduction in social, economic and political inequality, especially in middle-income countries, where development was impeded not only by internal inequalities but also by international governance policies. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda, with its emphasis on ODA and a strengthened global partnership, was therefore key to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the specific development needs of middle-income countries. The United Nations needed to decide what its priorities and contributions should be.

29. In recent years, his country had undergone a process of transformation focused on poverty eradication, the reduction of inequality and social exclusion, and gender- and human rights-based equity. To implement the 2030 Agenda, a national sustainable development council had been established to bring together relevant sectors of the Government, the United Nations system, civil society and the private sector. The United Nations system should support the implementation of national development plans in accordance with the priorities identified by each Government and its institutional capacities.

30. **Mr. Morales López** (Colombia) said that progress in reducing poverty had been uneven between and within some countries and regions; greater efforts must be made to ensure that poverty eradication initiatives benefited all countries. Financial and non-financial resources needed to be mobilized to build a partnership to eradicate multidimensional poverty. That required transfers of technology to developing countries on preferential terms.

31. The first step was to understand the full complexity of poverty. Accordingly, his Government had introduced a multidimensional poverty index as a complement to the measurement of monetary poverty, and public policies had been developed to address the issues and deprivations faced by the poorest households and provide detailed follow-up on their implementation. As a result, 4 million people had been lifted out of multidimensional poverty in his country between 2010 and 2015.

32. In developing countries, industrial development was a source of economic growth, diversification and added value. Stronger international cooperation was therefore needed to build capacity in developing countries and, in particular, to create an international environment conducive to the integration of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises into global value chains and markets. Support for those enterprises was key to reducing inequality and enhancing inclusiveness since they could create employment and generate income.

33. Strengthened statistical systems were needed to gather the timely, accurate and disaggregated data that would enable better decision-making. All people should have the same opportunities regardless of their social, economic or physical circumstances. Rising out of poverty was merely the first step. The challenge was to ensure that all persons enjoyed prosperity in fair and equitable societies.

34. **Mr. Tadesse** (Ethiopia) said that the decline in poverty had been uneven in different regions, but 72 countries, including Ethiopia, had achieved the Millennium Development Goals target of halving undernourishment. Poverty nevertheless remained one of the primary universal challenges. Income inequality and unemployment were increasing. A weak global economy and volatile commodity prices had a negative impact on poverty eradication, especially in least developed countries and in Africa.

35. His country had achieved six of the Millennium Development Goals, including a halving of absolute poverty, which had declined in all regions and in both rural and urban areas. The political commitment of his Government and its coordinated approach to increasing agricultural production, establishing a safety net and investing in labour-intensive infrastructure projects had resulted in inclusive economic growth and job creation. However, millions still lived in absolute poverty, unemployment remained high especially among young people, and structural transformation remained slow. His Government had therefore prioritized structural change in its second growth and transformation plan, which emphasized inclusive and sustainable industrialization with a view to making Ethiopia a leader in light manufacturing on the continent by 2025. Labour-intensive industries that used agricultural inputs and promoted transfers of technology were being expanded. His Government was also building eco-friendly industrial parks to attract local and foreign investment and had organized, together with UNIDO, a successful agro-industry forum earlier in the month.

The manufacturing process was linked to micro- and small enterprises to promote job creation and the transfer of knowledge and skills.

36. Ethiopia had been one of the pilot countries in the Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development programme of UNIDO, which had aligned its country partnership programme with his country's industrial development strategy. The assistance of UNIDO and other development partners was crucial, especially in the areas of financing and capacity-building in both the public and the private sectors. Poverty eradication through sustainable agriculture and industrialization required an enabling international economic environment and enhanced partnerships.

37. **Mr. Tobgay** (Bhutan) said that the challenge of poverty was most daunting in least developed countries, which required particular attention in their efforts to eradicate poverty and leave no one behind. At the national level, his country's top priority remained poverty eradication within a development framework based on the concept of gross national happiness. Poverty had been reduced from 23.2 per cent in 2008 to 12 per cent in 2014. Bhutan was tackling poverty through social and rural development programmes geared towards improving quality of life and promoting income-generating activities.

38. Poverty eradication required inclusive economic growth, infrastructure development and a business-friendly environment to create jobs, support skills development and expand economic opportunities. Tourism was one sector where his country had a comparative advantage and that sector had contributed to socioeconomic development. Sustainable ecotourism was one of the main development strategies of Bhutan. Its tourism policy was based on "high-value, low-volume" tourism and had ensured that the tourism sector was managed in an environmentally friendly and culturally sensitive manner. Tourism had become the second-largest revenue generator after hydropower.

39. Sustainable industrial development was key to economic diversification, structural economic transformation, productive capacity-building, export enhancement and revenue generation. A national economic development policy was in place to guide economic development efforts through sustainable industrialization.

40. Poverty eradication efforts were important to his Government because they enabled it to address some of the constraints that hampered development. For groups of countries in special situations, the support of development partners was indispensable for poverty eradication and sustainable development.

41. **Mr. Soares** (Timor-Leste) said that his country's resilience and the spirit of its struggle for independence had been transformed into a driving force for development as an independent State. The Sustainable Development Goals had been integrated into a strategic development plan for the period from 2011 to 2030, by which time it was hoped his country would be an upper middle-income country.

42. Least developed countries and small island developing States faced numerous challenges requiring special attention and access to adequate and predictable resources. The new quadrennial comprehensive policy review should be responsive to the needs of least developed countries in the context of the 2030 Agenda and should support their graduation. Development partners, the United Nations system and other stakeholders should therefore comply with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, which emphasized the critical role of ODA and foreign direct investment, and forge partnerships towards peace and resilience through enhanced engagement between Governments, development partners and civil society, in line with the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States promoted by the Group of Seven Plus (g7+).

43. His Government advocated a revitalization of global partnerships under the g7+ not only to share experiences but also to engage development partners, and mobilize resources for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. As a young country, Timor-Leste faced multiple development challenges but public-sector investment had improved the power supply, reduced child mortality, increased secondary school enrolment, and improved health care, international connectivity and vocational training and education.

44. As a post-conflict country, Timor-Leste had adopted a motto of "no peace without development and no development without peace." The country had made significant progress towards social cohesiveness and would hold presidential and parliamentary elections in 2017. The leadership transition from the older

generation to a younger one had strengthened the nation-building process and consolidated democracy, in particular through the g7+ intergovernmental organization, of which the permanent secretariat was located in Dili. The approach of the g7+ to engaging development partners was country-owned and country-led and used country systems. Other least developed countries were encouraged to adopt its "nothing about us without us" approach.

45. **Mr. Shilla** (United Republic of Tanzania) said that in spite of rapid economic development in recent years, his country still faced poverty challenges, including inadequate access to social and financial services, inadequate infrastructure, income inequality and a vulnerability to natural disasters and disease. His Government had therefore prioritized poverty eradication by, inter alia, adopting a coherent incomes policy, supporting rural development and providing basic social services.

46. His country's multisectoral approach to poverty eradication, articulated in its National Poverty Eradication Strategy, was reflected in the policies of its sectoral ministries and monitored by a unit in the Office of the Vice-President. The strategy would be key to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals since it aimed to accelerate economic growth, reduce poverty, improve social well-being and ensure good governance and accountability. Complementary government initiatives addressed other challenges such as climate change, the improvement of agricultural technology, trade expansion and infrastructure development. Those efforts had already yielded results such as 7 per cent economic growth, a figure which might have been higher had it not been for global and local challenges such as a severe drought.

47. As resource mobilization remained a challenge for most developing countries, a focus on a global partnership for sustainable development (Goal 17 of the 2030 Agenda), the means of implementation outlined in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the establishment of a technology bank for least developed countries, and the fulfilment of ODA commitments remained crucial. The cost per year of ending extreme poverty worldwide over 20 years had been estimated at $175 billion, which amounted to less than 1 per cent of the combined income of the world's rich countries; that showed that poverty eradication was possible if global partnerships were enhanced.

48. **Mr. Iziraren** (Morocco) said that although the rate of extreme poverty and percentage of undernourished people had declined, poverty was still one of the most pressing challenges, requiring the mobilization of stakeholder countries and of all stakeholders in international cooperation for development. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development should act as a catalyst to help developing countries rise to the challenge.

49. The battle against poverty had been a constant concern of public authorities in his country. Public budgets for 2006 provided for enhanced allocation of resources for social programmes, especially education, health care, and low-income housing, with special provisions for supporting youth employment programmes. The National Human Development Initiative launched by King Mohammed VI in 2005 had bolstered actions to assist all marginalized populations and had clearly had a favourable effect on poverty and vulnerability rates, which had decreased by 60 per cent and 40 per cent, respectively, between 2001 and 2011, with 50 per cent of those who had benefited coming from rural areas. The goal was to address social deprivation in order to ensure development in marginalized areas with a focus on vulnerable and underserved populations. That initiative had been recognized by the World Bank, with Morocco earning third place among 136 low and middle-income countries that had adopted programmes to improve the situation of marginalized populations.

50. As poverty was prevalent in rural areas, Morocco continued to accord high priority to rural development and improving the living conditions of rural populations, largely thanks to a country-driven policy focused on food self-sufficiency, developing joint family agricultural enterprises and promoting income-generating activities, especially for rural women.

51. His country had also undertaken projects designed to improve access to basic infrastructure in rural areas. Under the national programme for rural roadways, accessibility rates had reached 78per cent, lifting 2.5 million people out of isolation and building 15,500 km of roads in 2015. Those achievements had been reinforced by a new action plan launched in 2016, which would enable 32,600 km of roads to be built and

restore damaged roads, giving priority to the most remote rural areas.

52. The results achieved in the battle against poverty stemmed from a global, integrated vision, which consolidated a participatory approach that placed citizens at the centre of public policies; reinforced democratic processes to build a fair and prosperous society; and created a solid, competitive economy that would generate sustainable and inclusive growth to bring wealth and employment for all.

53. Morocco continued to take leadership in the fight against poverty and work towards achieving the rural development goals of the 2030 Agenda. The implementation of advanced decentralization processes and the acceleration of reforms to local and regional governance, the promotion of the rule of law and the fight against corruption should boost the actions of various stakeholders.

54. Morocco had encouraged South-South and triangular cooperation in its foreign policy, particularly in the African Arab world, strengthening its fight against poverty and food insecurity and sharing its experience to support numerous African countries through cooperation initiatives, including projects relating to irrigation, soil fertility, artificial insemination, the creation of agricultural hubs and the fight against the desert locust.

55. **Mr. Bankole** (Nigeria) said that remarkable progress had already been made towards the eradication of poverty, with good progress in halving the global proportion of people whose income was less than $1.50 per day. Approximately 900 million people had been lifted out of extreme poverty between 1990 and 2011. The main focus of the Sustainable Development Goals must now be lifting the bottom billion of the world's citizens from poverty, as prioritized in Goal 1. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda clearly indicated that global partnerships and concerted action were required to address the scourge of extreme poverty in a holistic manner. The bulk of those living in extreme poverty resided in Africa, particularly in least developed countries, that part of the world therefore merited particular attention, as did the cross-cutting and multidimensional issues of public health, nutrition, education and income level.

56. His country accorded high priority to sustainable, inclusive investment in industrialization to maximize the benefits of globalization; it was a key driver of economic growth, diversification and value addition in developing countries. Social protection as a right was also a powerful instrument for poverty reduction and social cohesion. Social security promoted sustainable economic and social development, helping countries to cope with global economic crises.

57. His Government had prioritized the empowerment of its citizens in achieving poverty eradication, social integration, and full employment and decent work through effective policy formulation, implementation and monitoring. To that end, in 2015 it had launched its most ambitious social inclusion programme, and in early 2016, it had introduced a new programme called the Labour Intensive Family Enterprise, providing agricultural extension services to farmers to promote and increase food production and provide employment. A Conditional Cash Transfer Scheme to provide financial support for many women, artisans, and agricultural workers had also been created. Social inclusion programmes, especially those targeting women and youth, would bring about social change.

58. Commending the United Nations system for supporting Members States in strengthening macroeconomic policy capacity and national development strategies, he urged the Organization and the international community to intensify its focus on eradicating extreme poverty and support developing countries in achieving that end. A value-driven global partnership could support the realization of the historic 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and make poverty history.

59. **Mr. Ramirez Carreño** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), noting that the first International Day for the Eradication of Poverty had been celebrated on 17 October 1993, said that with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, poverty eradication had become a priority for all of the world's countries. The United Nations had recognized the multidimensional nature of poverty and the need to focus on more than inadequate income and resources in order to guarantee sustainable livelihoods. According to the United Nations, over 830 million people lived in extreme poverty, 2.4 million people lacked access to modern sanitation services,

1.1 million people lacked electricity and 880 million people lived in marginalized urban areas. Fifty-nine million school-age children were not in school and youth unemployment rates hovered around 15 per cent, more than three times the rate for adults. That sad reality was proof that the hegemonic international economic system, namely, capitalism, had been a spectacular failure in furthering economic and social development worldwide. Colonialism, the plundering of natural resources, wars and foreign interference and an unjust and exclusive financial system had condemned entire continents and millions of people to live in the most abject poverty without any hope of progress. The thousands of refugees who had thrown themselves to their deaths in the Mediterranean were but one example.

60. Countries must work together to achieve greater equality and bridge the gap between the richest and poorest people, based on special and differential treatment, in a system of universal and equitable exchange where each country received according to its needs and was expected to give according to its capabilities. Those urgently required actions could not be left in the hands of private interests; rather, it was the responsibility of the State to promote development through its national plans. Development was a fundamental human right, not a business transaction. The international community must strive to advance policies on education and inclusiveness, based on principles of solidarity and complementarity, which were fundamental to guarantee that those living in poverty could overcome it and those who had overcome it would not fall back into it.

61. Having recovered sovereign management of its natural resources and distributed oil revenues to its people, Venezuela had turned to addressing existing inequalities (income and expenses) and promoting social programmes (health and housing, education, social protection), citizens' rights, inclusiveness, participation and gender equality. From that holistic perspective, overcoming poverty also meant overcoming the capitalist model through popular participation. Those were the principles underlying the zero poverty plan and economic and social agenda of the Bolivarian revolution, under which social programmes would be strengthened and developed through the participation of every sector of society, especially the people, who were increasingly organized and coordinating their actions with the State.

62. The figures pointed to success. Between 1998 and 2015, poverty rates had dropped from 28.9 per cent to 19.7 per cent and extreme poverty had gone from 10.8 per cent to 4.7 per cent. Unemployment had been reduced from 15.2 per cent to 7.3 per cent. In 2005, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) had declared the country free from illiteracy; overall school enrolment had increased from 43 to 79 per cent, and primary school enrolment, from 89 to 93 per cent. According to UNESCO, Venezuela held second place in Latin America for university enrolment and fifth in the world. The Gini coefficient, at 0.38, was above that of several Latin American countries. Furthermore, hundreds of thousands of people enjoyed access to free health care, were able to purchase food at a lower cost or obtain it at no cost, and could obtain credit below market rates and enjoy other benefits in addition to receiving a minimum daily wage. Under the Venezuelan housing programme (*Gran misión vivienda*), 1.1 million homes had been built since 2010.

63. In conclusion, he said that Venezuela would make every effort to implement an inclusive agenda aimed at achieving a poverty-free world and sustainable development with balanced integration of its economic, social and environmental dimensions, and restoring a spirit of solidarity among all men and women on Earth.

64. **Archbishop Auza** (Observer for the Holy See) said that, too many people still suffered economic, social and political exclusion; despite a decline in extreme poverty since 2008, over one in ten of the world's population lived below the poverty line. A number of lessons had been learned from past efforts to eradicate poverty. The first was the importance of reframing the issue as one of integral human development rather than as one primarily linked to economic growth. In his 1967 Encyclical Letter, Pope Paul VI had been one of the earliest proponents of the need for an integral human development approach, which had later been adopted by many international agencies. With the adoption of a human-centred development approach that viewed humans as social, political and spiritual and not simply economic producers and consumers, spending on health care, education, peace and community-building had finally

been acknowledged as a necessary investment in human and social capital.

65. A second lesson had highlighted the importance of addressing the relationship between inequality and poverty: policies that promoted greater equality, including equal education and universal access to health care, fostered the greatest economic development. A third lesson, underscored by Pope Francis in his September 2015 address to the plenary Assembly, was that the poor themselves needed to participate in poverty reduction. Exclusionary practices and structures would always be barriers to human development. Women must be included as equal and active participants in the development of their communities; when women and girls did not have access to education or were subjected to violence and discrimination, their families, communities and society were deprived of their important influence as drivers of development. As Pope Saint John Paul II had observed, work as a form of social participation was important because the goods and services it produced contributed to human dignity, but even more so because of how it changed people for the better.

66. Another lesson was that social protection was a benefit that contributed to human development and economic progress, and should extend beyond rich countries. The experience of developed countries and the evidence of social protection measures introduced in developing countries suggested that social protection promoted economic prosperity; indeed, the promotion of greater equality had led to greater economic efficiency and in many cases to the creation of new businesses and entrepreneurs.

67. **Mr. de Vidal y Sepulveda** (Observer for the Sovereign Order of Malta) said that work carried out by the Order through its regular activities, disaster relief branch, global funds and related projects focused on supporting the most vulnerable world citizens, irrespective of race, religion, social class or ideology.

68. Despite great progress in technological innovation, the availability of information, and economic productivity, the world still lacked equality of opportunity. Increasing inequality within and between States was the most pressing issue of modern times; the goal must be to fend it off and work for an environment that fostered collective development.

69. Providing basic services was a prerequisite for equitable socioeconomic development, and yet those services were lacking in many communities where the Order was active. The Sustainable Development Goals must be grounded in measures that elevated human dignity and social inclusion. A society was only as strong as its weakest members, a paradigm that extended to the world. In light of that reality, the Order of Malta had been instrumental in countries like Colombia, which had the greatest number of internally displaced refugees (7 million) in the world; it had trained farmers there in more efficient methods and provided them with more robust seed stock to achieve abundant harvests in spite of drought. Haiti had suffered through the region's worst drought in 35 years; in response to that crisis, the Order had initiated a number of drinking water projects to provide relief to the more than 1.5 million Haitians suffering from lack of water. It had also installed infrastructure resistant to natural disaster, such as aseismic aqueducts and more efficient irrigation systems. Such sustainable programmes provided relief for individual suffering while increasing peoples' economic capacity through the dignity of their own work. As conditions worsened in Haiti owing to Hurricane Matthew, the Order would intensify its work there. It called on the international community to do likewise.

70. The Order was committed to all of the Goals, especially the elimination of poverty through proper environmental stewardship and support; through a variety of innovative programmes, many of those issues could be dealt with for the benefit of humanity. In Bolivia, the Order had worked with local groups to improve agricultural practices and had achieved an 83 per cent increase in potato harvests, directly benefiting more than 600 families.

71. Beyond agriculture and infrastructure, it was important to invest in education, which provided a sustainable means of eradicating poverty. The Order continued to battle illiteracy and the dearth of programmes to develop vocational talent throughout Latin America with its reading and computer courses and vocational studies centres, especially for youth; those same strategies had brought significant progress to countries such as the Philippines and Timor-Leste.

72. The Order would pursue its mission of the past 900 years: coming to the aid of the marginalized and

cooperating with the international community to further social development. Aware that basic services were necessary to build sustainable and dignified societies, it called on the international community to commit both the political will and necessary resources to that end.

73. **Mr. Carvalho Pinheiro** (International Labour Organization (ILO)) said that extreme poverty continued to affect approximately 1 billion people around the world. Joblessness and underemployment, coupled with stagnant real wages, had stalled poverty reduction in many countries. Only one third of the poor in developing and emerging countries held a job; employment was often poorly paid, low-skill and precarious. The human cost of poverty lay behind the statistics: the undermining of dignity, vulnerability to hunger, illness, human rights abuses, discrimination, humiliation and exclusion.

74. The Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty had helped to raise awareness and strengthen coordination, coherence and synergies related to the contribution of decent work to eradicate poverty, demonstrating that access to decent work opportunities was the most effective and sustainable way out of poverty. The decade had brought together the agencies, funds and programmes in the United Nations system to work successfully and in a coordinated manner, and the International Labour Organization had collaborated to build policy coherence through the system-wide plan of action for the Second Decade.

75. "Full employment and decent work for all" was a universal objective by virtue of its inclusion in the 2030 Agenda under Sustainable Development Goal 8. The four pillars of the Decent Work Agenda — employment creation, social protection, rights at work and social dialogue — had become integral elements of the 2030 Agenda and were embedded in the targets of many of the other 16 Goals.

76. Adequate social protection systems were required to ensure that no one was left behind. To that end, ILO and the World Bank had launched a Global Partnership for Universal Social Protection aimed at supporting the design and implementation of sustainable social protection systems, including floors, to ensure income security and support for all people across the life cycle, especially the poor and vulnerable.

77. Promoting employment formalization to improve job quality was paramount. A new historic landmark recommendation concerning the transition from the informal to the formal economy (Recommendation 204) had been adopted at the International Labour Conference in 2015. That strategically significant recommendation provided guidance on the formalization of economic units and employment and was an important step towards increasingly inclusive development, poverty eradication, and the reduction of inequality, especially for those in the informal economy.

78. Another important milestone of the International Labour Conference had been the discussions on the theme "Decent work in Global Supply Chains". Global supply chains generated jobs, contributing to sustainable development, but could also lead to a decent work deficit. A resolution and action-oriented conclusions adopted at the Conference gave ILO a mandate to lead the global call for action to bridge governance gaps in sectoral, national, regional and international supply chains.

79. Through its seven centenary initiatives, ILO was focusing its efforts on ensuring that Governments and organizations had the tools to shape a sustainable, inclusive future. The End to Poverty Centenary Initiative was specifically designed as a vehicle to take forward the work of ILO in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.